



GARY E. JOHNSON
GOVERNOR

State of New Mexico
ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

Office of the Secretary
Harold Runnels Building
1190 St. Francis Drive, P.O. Box 26110
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502-6110
Telephone (505) 827-2855
Fax (505) 827-2836



JOHN R. D'ANTONIO, JR.
SECRETARY

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Contact: Don Beardsley, Permit Section Mgr., SWB, NMED
Phone: (505) 827-2952
Contact: Cathy Tyson-Foster, Communications Dir., NMED
Phone: (505) 827-0314

Environment Department Approves Stericycle Permit Modification

(Santa Fe, NM) – On September 27, the New Mexico Environment Department approved a modification to the solid waste facility permit held by Stericycle, Inc., a medical waste transporter and processor located in Albuquerque. The modification allows the facility to replace chemical treatment of medical waste, which uses chlorine dioxide, with a steam sterilization process.

Environment Secretary John R. D'Antonio, Jr. approved the Stericycle, Inc. permit modification, but imposed additional conditions, including restricting the amount of waste that the facility may process to 450 tons per month except in the case of an emergency and with the approval of the NMED.

A public hearing on the permit modification was held on May 2, in Albuquerque.

The facility, located at 1920 1st Street NW in Albuquerque, was originally granted a ten-year permit to operate as a medical waste transfer station and processing facility in July 1994. Under that permit, regulated medical waste was rendered non-infectious by using a technology that simultaneously shredded the waste and exposed it to chlorine dioxide gas.

The new steam sterilization, or autoclave technology, approved in the Stericycle, Inc. permit modification is the industry standard. Only water vapor (no toxic chemicals) is used in the autoclave sterilization process and it is proven to be more effective than chemical processes in rendering medical waste non-infectious.

The permit, with the recent modification, will expire on July 15, 2004 unless it is renewed.

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Stericycle, Inc. is the largest provider of regulated medical waste management services in the United States, Canada, and Puerto Rico.

For additional information, contact Don Beardsley, Manager, Permitting Section, Solid Waste Bureau, NMED, at (505) 827-2952, or Cathy Tyson- Foster, Communications Director, NMED, at (505) 827-0314.

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